

DAILY BULLETIN

FEBRUARY 4, 2005

U. S. FULLY COMPLIES WITH ALL ASPECTS OF KEY NPT CLAUSE

Nation spending millions to disarm, none on new nuclear weapons, Rademaker says 1

U.S. WILL “STAND RESOLUTELY” BESIDE IRAQIS AFTER ELECTIONS

State’s Schlicher says U.S. force reduction hinges on improved security..... 2

SENATE LEADER PROPOSES INITIATIVES FOR GLOBAL WATER, HEALTH

Frist offers proposals after visit to tsunami zone 3

SENATE VOTES TO CONFIRM GONZALES AS ATTORNEY GENERAL

Texan will be first Hispanic to hold top U.S. law enforcement job 4

U. S. FULLY COMPLIES WITH ALL ASPECTS OF KEY NPT CLAUSE

Nation spending millions to disarm, none on new nuclear weapons, Rademaker says

Those nations which would excuse violations of the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) by claiming that the United States is not in full compliance with NPT’s Article VI -- requiring negotiations toward general and complete nuclear disarmament -- are not only wrong, but dangerously misguided, says a senior U.S. arms control official.

Such an allegation against the United States is “utterly without foundation” and a distraction from the real crisis of noncompliance that threatens the credibility and viability of the treaty itself, according to Stephen Rademaker, assistant secretary of state for arms control.

During a February 3 presentation to the Arms Control Association in Washington, Rademaker said that the NPT is being challenged by nations who violate their nonproliferation obligations -- even while “claim[ing] immunity from punitive measures once [their] prohibited activities are uncovered.”

“We find it especially troubling that countries responsible for creating this crisis, including Iran and North Korea today, and Libya and Iraq in the past, are also countries that have long been listed by the United States as state sponsors of terrorism,” he said.

"These countries have an established record of providing support to terrorist organizations, and we have to worry that, should they acquire nuclear weapons, they might be tempted to provide these weapons to their terrorist allies," the assistant secretary continued.

Rademaker said that building consensus for "effective and sustained international action in cases of noncompliance" is a U.S. priority for the NPT Review Conference in New York, May 2-27.

In addressing the assertion that a negative appraisal of Article VI progress by the nuclear weapons states -- particularly by the United States -- explains or excuses violations by countries such as Iran and North Korea, Rademaker began by quoting the one-sentence Article:

"Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a Treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control."

He noted, first, that all the obligations in the provision apply equally to both nuclear and non-nuclear weapons states, and then outlined the U.S. record on Article VI objectives.

"The nuclear arms race ended well over a decade ago," he said, "and since then both we and the Russians have been working diligently to reduce our respective nuclear arsenals."

Rademaker listed the many important disarmament treaties negotiated by the United States over the past 15 years and cited the accomplishments derived from them:

Reduced from over 10,000 deployed strategic warheads to less than 6,000 by December 5, 2001, as required by the START I Treaty (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks); Eliminated nearly 90 percent of U.S. nonstrategic nuclear weapons and reduced the number of types of nuclear systems in Europe from five in 1991 to just one today; Dismantled more than 13,000 nuclear weapons since 1988;

Ceased production of highly enriched uranium for nuclear weapons since 1964, and halted the production of plutonium for nuclear weapons in 1988; Conducted no nuclear explosive tests since 1992; and Removed more than 200 tons of fissile material -

- enough material for at least 8,000 nuclear weapons --from the military stockpile.

Under the terms of the most recent agreement, the 2003 Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions, by 2012 the United States will have reduced its strategic nuclear warheads about 80 percent from its 1991 deployed level. "And we are not waiting until 2012 to implement these reductions," Rademaker said.

In keeping with alliance commitments and defense requirements, he said, the United States has conceptually explored technological options to meet various defense contingencies but has stopped even this advanced concept study, and continues to adhere to its long-existing nuclear testing moratorium.

"The fact is," he said, "that the United States is not developing any new nuclear weapons, including low-yield nuclear weapons."

"We are," he said, "spending hundred of millions of dollars each year to dismantle missiles and WMD (weapons of mass destruction) in the United States and Russia, while spending zero -- let me repeat -- zero dollars on the development or production of new nuclear weapons."

U.S. WILL "STAND RESOLUTELY" BESIDE IRAQIS AFTER ELECTIONS

State's Schlicher says U.S. force reduction hinges on improved security

The United States "will resolutely stand beside" the Iraqi people in their struggle to achieve democracy, stability and prosperity following the January 30 elections, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs and Iraq Coordinator Ronald Schlicher says.

"As we enter this post-election period, our reconstruction efforts will be focused on assisting the Iraqi Transitional Government to improve security, create jobs, develop economic policy and regulatory frameworks, and expand private enterprise," Schlicher said in a prepared statement before the Senate Armed Services Committee February 3.

Reviewing the next steps of Iraq's political process, Schlicher said the large voter turnout showed that Iraqis reject their authoritarian past.

He said the key to U.S. force reduction in Iraq is improving the readiness and training of the Iraqi security forces, which he said have shown steady improvement since April 2004.

"Iraqi forces had limited success in the fighting last April. But since then, they have done steadily better in the disarming of the Sadr militia in August and the fighting in Fallujah in November. Most recently, security forces displayed vigilance and preparedness in providing security for the elections," Schlicher said.

Reviewing "international engagement" to strengthen Iraq's security, Schlicher noted that NATO has begun its training mission for Iraqi officers and staff, with offers of support from Jordan and Egypt.

Regarding training for Iraqi police, he said Jordan has helped set up the International Police Training Center near Amman, Jordan; Germany has trained 400 police in the United Arab Emirates; and France has offered to train up to 1,500 Iraqi police.

Schlicher said that progress in the political arena will improve the security situation, as shown by the successful cooperation between the Iraqi Security Forces and the Independent Electoral Commission of Iraq.

That cooperation demonstrated that "Iraqi forces will fight for responsible Iraqi political leadership and defend the Iraqi public against aggression," Schlicher said.

In addition to helping Iraqi forces stabilize their country, the United States will continue its commitment to help rebuild Iraq, Schlicher said.

"[O]ur reconstruction efforts have made progress in restoring essential services, expanding the availability of quality medical assistance, rehabilitating public buildings and roads, advising the government on economic and financial reforms, and introducing Iraqis at all levels to the basics of democratic practice and rule of law," he said.

SENATE LEADER PROPOSES INITIATIVES FOR GLOBAL WATER, HEALTH

Frist offers proposals after visit to Asian tsunami zone

The majority leader of the U.S. Senate, Senator Bill Frist, is proposing several measures to improve the long-term quality of life in impoverished nations.

Frist's proposals arise from an early January trip to Indian Ocean nations struck by an earthquake and tsunami as well as his previous trips to other impoverished regions.

Speaking February 2 at a Senate Commerce Committee hearing on the response to the tsunami, Frist, a Republican from Tennessee, said he plans to propose legislation to devote more foreign assistance to increase developing-world access to clean and potable water.

"We must work to improve water quality not only in the areas that the tsunami damaged but everywhere that people live without clean water," Frist said in his statement to the committee. "At least 1.2 billion people live without clean water; 2.4 billion lack access to basic sanitation. This is a crisis."

Frist - who is also a physician - further proposed creation of a Global Health Corps, organized and operating much like the Peace Corps. He suggests creation of a volunteer unit of medical professionals who would provide rapid assistance in the event of disaster, and ongoing medical assistance to underdeveloped regions.

Frist also calls for an initiative to stimulate private investment in development of water infrastructure around the world.

SENATE VOTES TO CONFIRM GONZALES AS ATTORNEY GENERAL

Texan will be first Hispanic to hold top U.S. law enforcement job

By Warner Rose

Washington File Staff Writer

The Senate on February 3 voted 60 to 36 to confirm White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales as the new attorney general of the United States.

Among President Bush's nine new Cabinet nominees, Gonzales faced the most opposition from Senate Democrats because of his role in preparing White House legal opinion memorandums concerning the treatment of detainees during the U.S. campaign against terror. Critics claimed that the memorandums justified the mistreatment of detainees, a contention that Gonzales rejected.

During the approximately six hours of debate prior to the vote, senators spoke in opposition to, or in favor of, the nominee and the administration's policies in the War on Terror.

The Senate Judiciary Committee on January 26 recommended Gonzales for confirmation by a 10-8 party-line vote. That vote also followed a session of close questioning of the nominee.

The Senate has already confirmed seven of Bush's nominees, the most recent being Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman, who was approved by voice vote on January 31. The Senate's action on Gonzales leaves only one Cabinet nominee, Michael Chertoff for secretary of homeland security, still undergoing the confirmation process. Chertoff appeared before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs on February 2.

The committee has not yet voted to recommend Chertoff for confirmation, although he is not facing opposition. In coming months, the Senate will need to conduct confirmation proceedings for several nominees to posts of under, deputy and assistant secretaries, as well as for certain other high-level officials. The latter include a yet-to-be-nominated new U.S. trade representative.

Gonzales, who will be the United States' first Hispanic attorney general, is a native of San Antonio, Texas, and a longtime friend of President Bush. Bush appointed Gon-

zales as White House counsel in January 2001. Prior to that, Gonzales was a judge on the Texas Supreme Court. Before his appointment to the court in 1999, Gonzales was secretary of state for the state of Texas. His duties in this position included acting as then-Governor Bush's lead liaison on Mexico and border issues, and as chief elections officer. Gonzales was also Governor Bush's general counsel.

Gonzales' official biography may be viewed on the Internet at: http://usinfo.state.gov/special/transition/transition_nominees/gonzales.html

Pleases Note: Most texts and transcript mentioned in the U.S. Mission Daily Bulletin are available via our homepage: www.usmission.ch

Select "Washington File" from the top menu bar.